

Swarthmore College

Works

Linguistics Faculty Works

Linguistics

12-1-1995

Review Of "Small Clauses In English: The Nonverbal Types" By B. Aarts

Theodore B. Fernald

Swarthmore College, tfernal1@swarthmore.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-linguistics>



Part of the [Linguistics Commons](#)

[Let us know how access to these works benefits you](#)

Recommended Citation

Theodore B. Fernald. (1995). "Review Of "Small Clauses In English: The Nonverbal Types" By B. Aarts". *Language*. Volume 71, Issue 4. 841-842. DOI: 10.2307/415771
<https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-linguistics/184>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by . It has been accepted for inclusion in Linguistics Faculty Works by an authorized administrator of Works. For more information, please contact myworks@swarthmore.edu.

Linguistic Society of America

Review

Author(s): Theodore B. Fernald

Review by: Theodore B. Fernald

Source: *Language*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (Dec., 1995), pp. 841-842

Published by: [Linguistic Society of America](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/415771>

Accessed: 17-08-2015 19:18 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Linguistic Society of America is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Language*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

banian Bektashi Tekke, an Anatolian Sufi order in Michigan. The focus of the book derives from Trix's puzzlement, after studying for 12 years with the same spiritual teacher or *murshid*, at her own inability to articulate the method by which she was learning or the content of what she had learned. Recognizing that what she seemed to be learning was how to conduct a relationship between a *talib* 'spiritual seeker' and a *murshid*, she examines one lesson out of the hundreds experienced over the years to illustrate the development and maintenance of that relationship. The linguistic focus of the book is the dialogue within that learning situation and the linguistic harmony that results.

The lesson selected, referred to as the Hizir Lesson, includes numerous forms of interaction as well as a 'meta-dimension' in that she and her teacher discuss the relationship between *murshid* and *talib* with reference to their own situation. In the six chapters of the book, Trix analyzes a range of sociolinguistic aspects of the lesson that reflect on this relationship.

The foundation of her relationship with her *murshid* is the process of building linguistic attunement, a term borrowed from Alton Becker, Trix's linguistic mentor, and defined for the purposes of this study as 'an increasing coordination through *play-full* recollecting of dialogue with another', a recursive process which leads to the creation of a shared language, along the lines of what Wittgenstein referred to as language games. In Ch. 1, 'Introduction' (6–30), Trix relates attunement to the notions of linguistic convergence as proposed by Uriel Weinreich, William Labov, and Marvin Herzog; hermeneutical appropriation as outlined by Paul Ricoeur; and structural coupling, a concept from cybernetics developed by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela. The rest of the chapter discusses the kinds of attunement that provide the organizing principles of the study.

In Ch. 2, 'The interactive structure of episodes in a lesson' (31–84), Trix illustrates the mutually-developed conventions of interaction that give episodic structure to the lesson through bilingual (Turkish and English) transcription and analysis. Ch. 3, 'Keying interaction with Baba' (85–107), focuses on control of topic, genre, and language variety to convey attitudes and relationships. Ch. 4, 'Texture of interaction with Baba' (108–31), examines code-switching and lexical and syntactic mirroring as strategies of social cohesion. Ch. 5, 'Bektashi frame of learning' (132–45), places the lesson in

the interpretive frame of Bektashi Islamic practices. In Chapter 6, 'Learning as attunement' (146–57) Trix compares her experience of learning Bektashi discourse to that of Helen Keller learning a new way of perceiving from Annie Sullivan, breaking down previous assumptions about the structure of communication and acquiring new ones.

There is much to be learned in this book about the processes of second language acquisition, including development of competence in second language discourse strategies and the linguistic fine-tuning of conversational cohesion. The substantial, though not overwhelming, transcriptions are well-analyzed. Their clarity for the nonspecialist, however, would be improved by different and better-explained transcription conventions. [BARBARA G. HOFFMAN, *Cleveland State University*.]

Small clauses in English: The nonverbal types. By BAS AARTS. (Topics in English linguistics, 8.) Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1992. Pp. xi, 228.

This monograph uses the assumptions of Government and Binding (GB) as tools for cataloguing various English nonverbal small clauses (SCs). Aarts characterizes the domain of his investigation as constructions consisting of V NP XP, where X = N, A, or P and where there is a subject-predicate relation between the NP and the XP. Theoreticians and descriptive linguists alike are intended as the audience of this monograph, and a major thesis is that theoretical tools of analysis can be useful for the descriptive endeavor. A provides attested data when possible as well as corpus-based frequency statistics for the constructions he surveys.

Ch. 1, 'Introduction' (1–7), provides a brief characterization of nonverbal SCs and a discussion of how the tools of theoretical analysis can be useful in linguistic description. Ch. 2, 'Previous approaches' (9–36), provides an overview of the relevant syntax, focussing on GB of the early 1980s, since this is the framework assumed by most of the analytical work A surveys. Ch. 2 also includes a discussion of the Predication Theory of Edwin Williams which analyzes [NP XP] sequences as two complements rather than a single constituent. A rejects the latter position for most cases based on evidence presented in Ch. 3, 'Small clauses as constituents' (37–71).

A's arguments are based on coordination tests, the ability of nonreferential *it* to appear postverbally, and the ability of SCs to appear in subject and adjoined positions, citing depictives and absolutes as instances of the latter. A also claims that SCs can occur independently.

Ch. 4, 'Special constructions' (73–126), surveys and analyzes verb-preposition constructions as belonging to two classes, one involving a SC complement and another in which NP and PP are separate complements. Heavy NP shift is held responsible for the ability of the NP and the P to appear in different positions with respect to each other. In this chapter, *prevent ... from* and *regard ... as* and related sentences are discussed. *Prevent* and *regard* are taken to be exceptional case marking (ECM) verbs having IP complements; *from* and *as* are argued to be instances of INFL.

Ch. 5, 'Extractions from small clauses' (127–69), discusses rightward and leftward extraction from various types of SCs. For rightward extraction, A surveys the standard diagnostics to determine whether the landing site is within VP or outside it. Included also is a discussion of when the nonreferential *it* may and may not appear.

In Ch. 6, 'The small clause node' (171–89), A argues that SCs should be analyzed as tenseless IPs which have agreement features on the INFL node and which contain an abstract copula. This chapter contains brief speculations on what the syntactic category of the SC constituent would be in split INFL versions of GB. Ch. 7, 'Conclusion' (191–94), is a brief summary.

A seems to have amply demonstrated his point about the usefulness of a theoretical framework for the descriptive endeavor. In addition, the monograph is well organized and clearly written, and the argumentation is easy to follow. In many cases, the summaries of previous work are sufficiently detailed to save time for the reader. In some cases, however, counterintuitive aspects of previous work are rejected on the basis of superficial objections without discussing the original motivation in much detail. Further, certain aspects of A's analysis (e.g. why an abstract copula is necessary, an assumption which provides the rationale for not discussing verbal SCs in depth) are not justified in sufficient detail to satisfy the initiated theorist. For the theorist who is not a specialist in the syntax of SCs, this work is likely to be a valuable introduction. [THEODORE B. FERNALD, *Swarthmore College*.]

Mixed languages: 15 case studies in language intertwining. Ed. by PETER BAKKER and MAARTEN MOUS. (Studies in language and language use, 13.) Amsterdam: IFOTT (Institute for functional research into language and language use), 1994. Pp. vii, 244.

This fascinating group of papers is the first book that attempts to describe 'mixed languages', i.e. as discrete from pidgins and creoles, which historically have also been labelled 'mixed languages' due to the lack of a clear genetic relationship with any one contributing language. These 15 case studies represent language varieties from across the world: Michif, a language spoken in North Dakota and Manitoba (PETER BAKKER, 13–33); eight Romani dialects from Europe to the Near East (NORBERT BORETZKY and BIRGIT IGLA, 35–68); Town Frisian in the northern Netherlands (COR VAN BREE, 69–82); Maltese (A. J. DREWES, 83–111); Copper Island Aleut (EVGENIJ V. GOLOVKO, 113–21); Shelta, the secret language of Irish Travellers (ANTHONY P. GRANT, 123–50); a contact language of the former Dutch East Indies (present Indonesia) labelled Javindo by MIEL DE GRUITER (151–59); the male register of Island Carib spoken in Belize (BEREND J. HOFF, 161–68); Amarna-Akkadian, an extinct variety purportedly used only for writing in the 14th century B.C. in the Middle East (MAARTEN KOSSMANN, 169–73); Ma'a, a language of the Mbugu people in Tanzania (MAARTEN MOUS, 175–200); a language of healers in Bolivia called Callahuaya (201–5) and Media Lengua of Ecuador (207–11, both by PIETER MUYSKEN); Ilwana, a language of Kenya (DEREK NURSE, 213–22); another Indonesian variety called Petjo (HADEWYCH VAN RHEEDEN, 223–37); and KiMwani of Mozambique (THILO C. SCHADEBERG, 239–44). Some of these papers are a bit thin on data and analysis, but as gathered together they offer a good introductory look at languages that have been little documented in the literature on language contact.

In the introduction (1–11), the editors define a mixed language in its simplest form as a variety which derives its grammar from one source and most (approximately 90%) of its lexicon from another (the general source of phonology is apparently more flexible). The editors also identify a rather ambiguous contact-induced process